

Student Services and Development

Annual Report 2023-2024



Elgin
Community
College

*Student Services
and Development*

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SSD Org Chart

AVP of Student Services & Development

Dr. Lulu Blacksmith
until April 2024
John H. Long
July 2024 onward

Dean of Students
John H. Long
Until July 2024

- Academic Advising
- TRiO Student Support Services
- ADA, Student Access & Disabilities Services
- Veterans Services
- Student Conduct

Assoc Dean of Student Success
Peggy Gundrum

- Transfers Services
- Wellness Services
- Career Development Services
- Student Success Coaches

Director of Athletics
Kent Payne

- Athletic Coordinators
- Sports Information and Academic Specialist
- Athletics/Fitness Centers

Assistant Dean of the Student Experience and Engagement
Amybeth Maurer

- First Year Experience
- Student Life

Dean of Enrollment and Student Financial Services
Amy Perrin

- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- First Stop and Registration
- Admissions and Records
- Recruitment and Outreach
- Center for Global Engagement
- Testing Services

Introduction

Dear Board of Trustees, Dr. Heinrich, Colleagues, and the broader ECC Community,

I am grateful for the opportunity to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report for the Student Services & Development (SSD) Division at Elgin Community College. This report not only showcases some of the remarkable efforts of our Division over the past year, but also serves as a testament to the myriad of ways students, faculty and other employees, and our larger community are supported by the work of the Division.

Student Services & Development has continued to be a cornerstone of student success at ECC, focused on delivering exceptional programs and services that foster academic achievement and personal growth, and remove barriers so students can accomplish their goals. In this report, you will find data-driven insights into our programs' impact, outcomes of new and continuing initiatives, and student feedback and testimonials.

Our commitment to creating an inclusive, supportive, and enriching educational environment in and outside of the classroom remains unwavering, and this report underscores our dedication to continuously improving ourselves and the student experience at ECC.

I invite you to explore the highlights of our work and join us in celebrating the achievements of our students and the contributions of our dedicated colleagues.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John H. Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John H. Long
Associate Vice President of Student Services & Development
Elgin Community College
August 2024

At a Glance

9,808

Students
Enrolled

+2%

18,052

Academic Advising
Sessions

+0.5%

5,957

Spartan Food
Pantry Visits

+26%

2,355

Early alerts sent
by faculty

+5%

93

Study Abroad
participants

988

Career Services
Appointments

-5%

30

Student Clubs/
Organizations

+11%

994+

Middle School
Students Visited
ECC

% changes are from last year to this year.

Student Demographics

- 47% Hispanic or Latino
- 34% White
- 7% Asian
- 4% Two or More Races
- 4% Black or African American
- 4% Unknown
- <1% American Indian or Alaska Native
- <1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders

Academic Advising

The Academic Advising Department is responsible for guiding and supporting students in their academic journey. Our advisors assist students in selecting courses, creating an academic plan, and ensuring they meet graduation requirements. We are happy to help students succeed academically and, ultimately, professionally.

Our Team



Academic Advising Sessions

18,052
Sessions

Students are able to meet with an advisor in-person, virtually, or over the phone. Students meet by appointment or drop-in as well as email advisors to ask questions or share their academic concerns.

Students' preferred meeting channels

- 63% In-Person (+7%)
 - 24% Via Phone (+2%)
 - 13% Virtually (-9%)
- (% changes are from last year to this year.)

Just One More Campaign

In fall 2022 the Advising team piloted the “Just One More” campaign, which encourages students to take “just one more” class per semester to improve timely degree completion. The goal of this campaign is to help students build momentum, finish on time, and boost their academic success.

The Fall 2023 enrollment cycle pilot data showed the overall average credits enrolled from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 for students who met with an advisor increased from 10 credits to 11 credits. This important enrollment and success campaign continues on through 2024 into 2025.

Intentional Connections

The Spartan Success (Early Alert) Program improves student success, retention, and graduation rates.

This year, an alert for Wellness Services was added. This alert created an additional way for faculty to connect students with Wellness Services.

The Early Alert Program:

- Identifies students who need additional support early in the semester.
- Faculty take quick action and raise an [early alert](#) to notify advisors when a student may be experiencing academic, financial, personal or social difficulties.
- Advisors provide equitable, personalized, and meaningful support to help students stay on track and be successful in their academic journey.

2,355 Early Alerts +5%

Students who meet with advisors after an alert is issued are more likely to earn an A, B, or C grade in their class, compared to their peers who received an early alert but do not follow up with an advisor in a timely manner.

We recognize that addressing challenges or barriers early on in the semester helps students have a better chance of overcoming them and being successful in their classes. Students who meet with their advisor for an early alert are more likely to earn a passing grade in their class, compared with those who receive an alert but do not meet with their advisor during the semester to address the challenge or barrier they were experiencing. We continuously remind our students to take advantage of these resources and support systems available to them.

Advisor Engagement - Transfer Culture

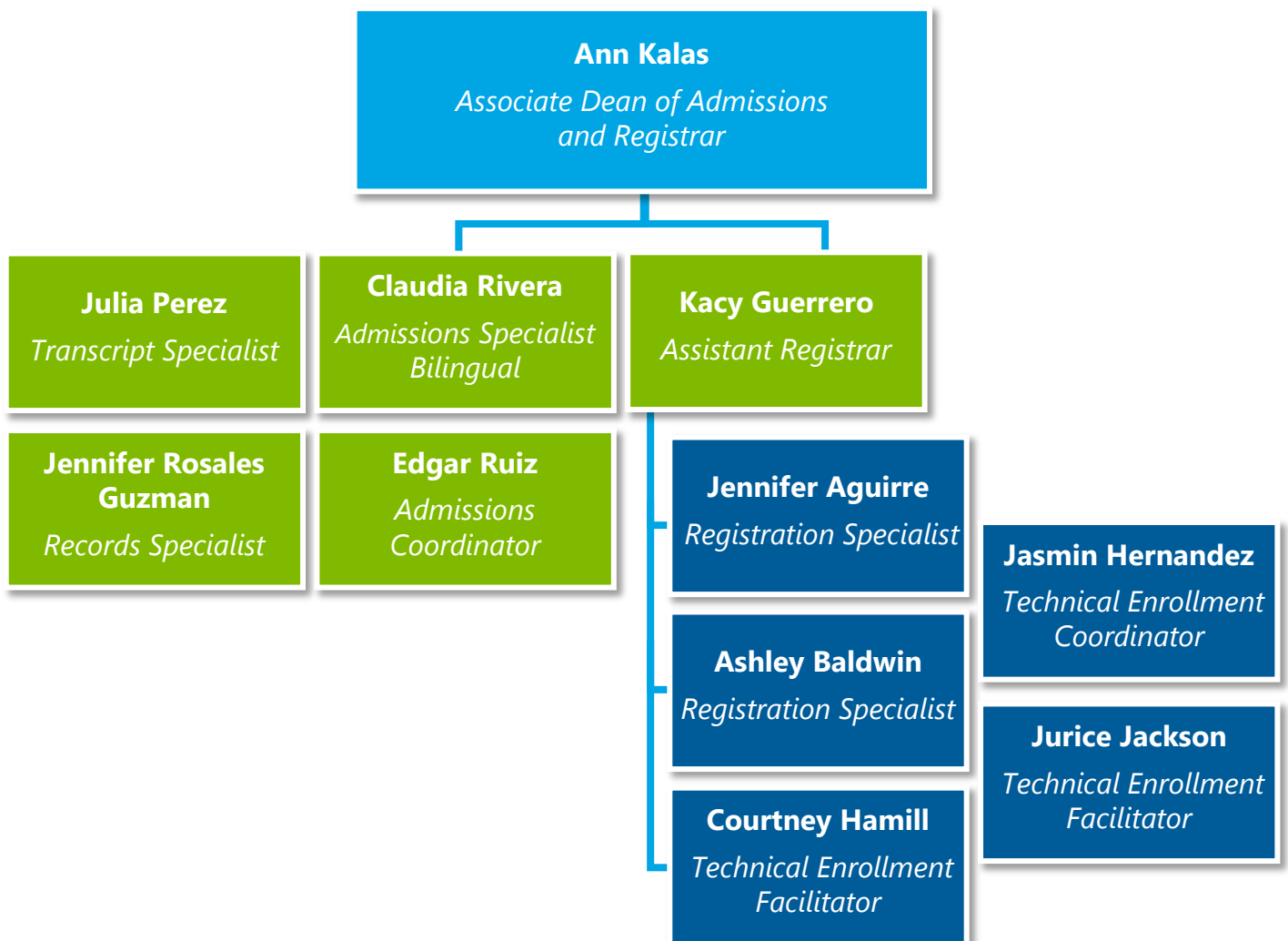
This academic year, advisors focused on participating in campus visits and transfer summits. These opportunities allowed advisors to experience the transfer process of students for various institutions. Eleven campus visits and transfer summits were attended with each advisor participating in at least one event. These experiences increased advisor knowledge and strengthened university partnerships.



Admissions, First Stop, Registration and Records

These areas provide critical services to applicants and students from their first steps to apply, complete orientation, register, graduate and then move onto employment or additional education. Some of our services are face to face, and many are behind the scenes. All are critical to the student's experience in moving through the enrollment pipeline and the student experience, through graduation and beyond.

Our Team



Accomplishments

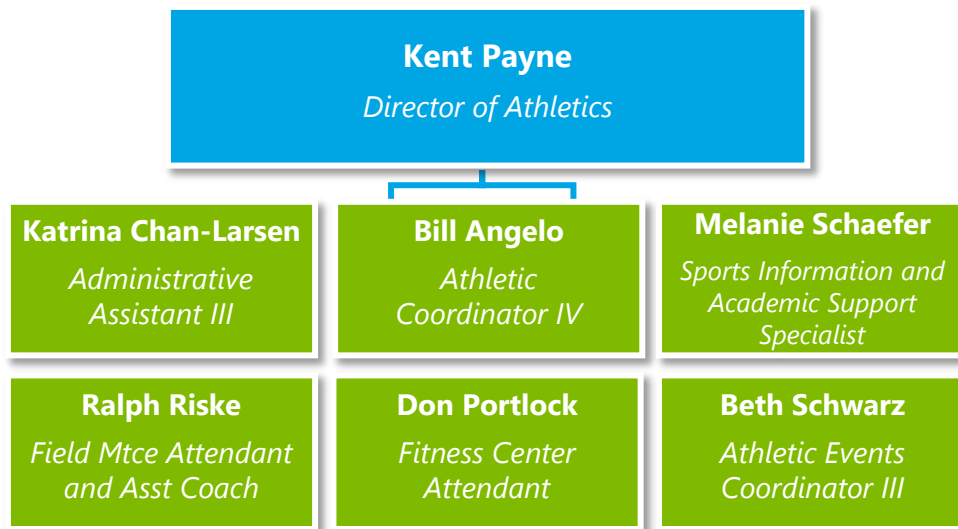
May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024:

- Processing 7848 incoming transcripts
- Importing 11,972 applications
- Importing 595 inquiries
- Processing 14,106 outgoing transcripts
- Evaluating 1,457 college transcripts for transfer credit
- Identifying and resolving 121 duplicate records
- Corresponding with students and community members via 4711 live chats: 2023SU (1291), 2023FA (1479), 2024SP (1671)
- Conferring 2,489 degrees, certificates, and credentials in May 2023 (923), August 2023 (472), and December 2023 (1,094)
- Celebrating 664 students in attendance at the May 2023 (410) and December 2023 (254) graduation ceremonies

Athletics and Wellness

Our Athletic Department is a vital component of Elgin Community College. Our team comprises coaches, trainers, administrative staff and departments across campus. We all work together to develop and help athletes excel in both their chosen sports and academics. The Athletic Department also plays a crucial role in ensuring compliance with athletic regulations and managing recruitment processes.

Our Team



Athletic Awards

All-Illinois Skyway Collegiate Conference.

Our students earned a total of 15 awards. *This represents a 7% increase from last year.*

3 Men's Soccer

1 Men's Golf

3 Men's Basketball

3 Women's Basketball

5 Baseball

All-Region

Our students earned five All-Region awards.

1 Men's Soccer

4 Baseball

Academic Awards

(% changes from last year to this year.)

Fall 2023	Spring 2024
22 Honors List -22%	21 Honors List -12%
16 Dean's List -16%	14 Dean's List -22%
3 President's List -50%	8 President's List -11%

Academic All-Conference

23 First-Year Awards

13 Dick Durrant Awards

Student-Athlete GPA Assessment

Students work closely with an assigned academic advisor for student athletes in collaboration with the Athletics Academic Support Specialist to discuss academic concerns to ensure student athletes are successful with academic goals. We are happy to report that the average grade point average increased from 2.46 in the 2022-23 academic year to 2.49 in AY2023-24. The Spring 2024 GPA (2.62) is the highest recorded semester average in at least three academic years. Approximately 50 student-athletes are continuing their academic career at four-year institutions. Currently, 10 are also continuing their athletic career.

Board of Trustees Athletic Scholarship

There were 89 scholarships awarded in the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters totaling \$200,640.60.

Also, two students were each awarded a \$1700 scholarship from the Elgin Sports Hall of Fame Foundation for being outstanding student-athletes at ECC.

Successful Social Media

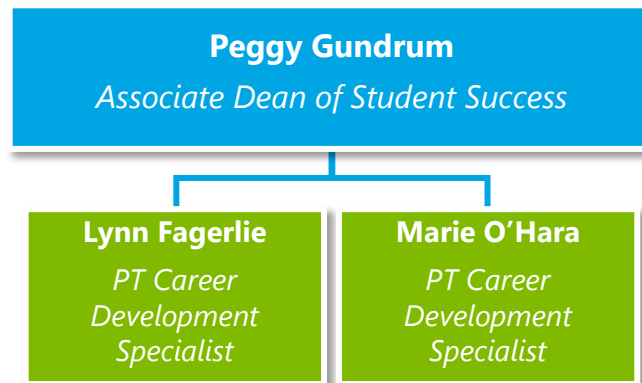
Each platform (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) continues to grow its audience every academic year.



Career Development Services

Career Development Services (CDS) offers a variety of in-person and virtual services to help students choose a major, explore career options, define professional goals, help them with employment search and employability skills.

Our Team



Our team consistently evaluates our programs and services. We are committed to providing students with the support and resources needed to ensure they are on track toward achieving their academic and professional goals.

One-on-One Appointments

935 students were served through one-on-one appointments with a Career Development Specialist (CDS). This is a slight decrease from the previous year, but this is due to the fact that a third Career Development Specialist position has remained vacant for much of the year, despite efforts to fill the role.

935
Appointments

Choosing a Major and Career Exploration

511
Appointments

Career Development Specialists (CDS) provides each student a personalized 50-minute appointment. Students identify where they are in the career development process, discover opportunities and barriers and locate resources and sources of career information. The specialist works with the student in determining next steps and a plan to achieve their goals.

Career Assessment Package (CAP)

189

CAP sessions

Unique to ECC is the offering of two career assessments utilized in career counseling. The Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventory (SII) are offered, along with career counseling, in a CAP session. The interpretation of both career assessments is typically completed in 2-4 appointments. Students leave with a good understanding of their personalities and interests and how they align with a career/major choice, and are invited to attend additional career counseling after the CAP interpretation sessions.

The cost of the MBTI and SII is considerably lower than other community colleges in the area. Also unique to ECC, the CAP is offered to District 509 high school juniors and seniors.

Employability Skills

235

Appointments

Career Development Specialists work with students on building a winning resume, mastering the interview and finding the job that's a good fit for them.

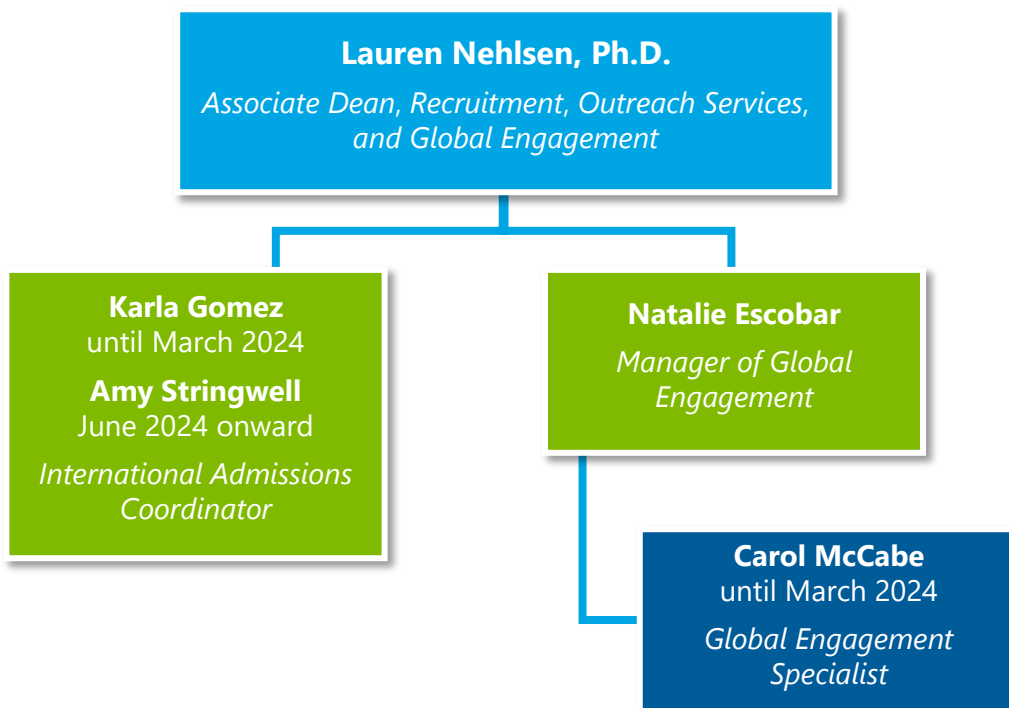
Classrooms Presentations

34 Classroom Presentations		
6 Introduction to Career Development		
11 Resumes	6 Career Exploration	2 Interviewing Skills
6 ePortfolio	2 LinkedIn	1 Professionalism

Center for Global Engagement

The Center for Global Engagement is committed to fostering and promoting international education experiences for ECC students, faculty, and staff, and the District 509 community. The Center for Global Engagement warmly welcomes international students from over 42 countries, offers educational abroad programs aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding and promoting global citizenship within our diverse campus community. Complementing these efforts is a full-time International Student Homestay Program, which endeavors to cultivate cultural appreciation, enhance global awareness, and celebrate diversity.

Our Team



Highlights and Accomplishments

The Center for Global Engagement comprises three distinct operating units:

- International Student and Scholar Services
- International Student Homestay Program
- Education Abroad

All units work interdependently to provide internationally-focused educational experiences that prepare students in Community College District 509 to live in a global society.

International Student and Scholar Services

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) has experienced a dynamic year of engagement and innovation in both recruitment and student engagement. The past year has seen a significant increase in the number of

international students inquiring and applying to the college. This growth can be attributed to targeted recruitment strategies, enhanced digital marketing efforts, and strengthened partnerships with international educational institutions. In July 2023, ISSS welcomed a new International Admissions Coordinator/International Recruiter, Karla Gomez, to the team and whose warm and friendly spirit has welcomed numerous international students to campus.

For the terms Fall 2023, Summer 2023, and Spring 2024, the Center for Global Engagement processed over 480 applications for admission and issued over 375 I-20s. International student recruitment activities increased in FY 2024. This represented an increase of about 5% from 2022-2023, largely attributed to targeted recruitment strategies, enhanced digital marketing



International Student Enrollment

42 countries represented
160 total students (unduplicated)

Summer 2023

22

Fall 2023

75

Spring 2024

63

efforts, and strengthened international partnerships. The competitive landscape for international student recruitment has intensified, requiring continuous innovation in recruitment strategies. The department maintains steady attendance and engagement at virtual recruitment fairs and at traditional recruitment fairs in target markets.

The college was also the recipient of a \$10,000 Sir Cyril Taylor Memorial Scholarship for Study in the US award to enroll underrepresented or disadvantaged students from the United Kingdom. A key criterion will be that students must self-identify as economically, socially or educationally disadvantaged. ECC was one of only 10 US institutions to receive this prestigious scholarship award.

The department organized two cultural excursions for international students to immerse themselves in American culture—one to Goebberts Pumpkin Patch and another to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. These trips provide international students with opportunities to experience local culture firsthand, helping them understand American customs, traditions, and daily life.

International Student Homestay Program

14

Host Families

The International Student Homestay Program remains committed to offering safe and affordable housing solutions for international students within our local community. Affordable, safe housing remains one of the largest barriers for international students seeking to study in the U.S. The cost of housing in many cities is often prohibitively expensive, especially for international students who may have limited financial resources or are paying higher tuition fees. Navigating lease agreements, understanding tenant rights, and dealing with landlords can be particularly daunting for students unfamiliar with local laws and customs. Language barriers can further complicate these processes. The homestay program offers a viable solution to these challenges by offering a cost-effective housing solution with local families that allows international students to experience local culture firsthand and receive guidance and support in adjusting to a new country, enhancing their overall experience and easing the transition.

This year, the program has successfully engaged 14 host families, including the recruitment and integration of two new families. Additionally, in response to the rising costs faced by host families, the program has revised the monthly housing stipends to more accurately reflect the current local housing market conditions.



In an effort to enhance the experience for both hosts and students, the homestay program revised the homestay agreement to better address participants' needs and expectations.

This year, the program saw participation from nine students, including four from countries not previously represented in our program. Notably, we were able to promptly accommodate a student who lost her privately arranged housing, demonstrating our ability to respond swiftly to urgent housing needs.

Education Abroad

93+

Education abroad
participants

Studying abroad provides students with invaluable opportunities to immerse themselves in different cultures, languages, and ways of life. More than 93 ECC students participated in education abroad programming, including traditional, on-the-ground study abroad programs in Costa Rica, England, France, Ireland, Italy, and Spain. Study abroad immerses students in different cultures, promoting greater understanding and appreciation of global diversity. This exposure helps in developing intercultural competencies that are invaluable in today's interconnected world, and promotes ECC's philosophy of Learning, specifically, to empower "individuals to improve their own lives as well as the economic, social, and cultural conditions of local and global communities."

Additionally, students who were unable to travel abroad had the opportunity to participate in faculty-led, virtual study abroad programs through a special partnership with EduAfrica. These programs offer ECC students the opportunity to connect with African students, faculty, and subject matter experts from various African cultures and backgrounds and gain insights into diverse perspectives. Virtual study abroad eliminates many of the barriers to traditional study abroad



programs, such as cost, visa requirements, and travel restrictions. This makes international experiences more accessible to a broader range of students, including those with financial constraints, family obligations, or health concerns.

Student comments on study abroad:

"I learned a lot about lots of people I never would've crossed paths with had I not taken this class. This was really the first time I had gotten exposure to other countries around the globe. I have never been outside the country so this was all new and interesting for me."

"One thing I learned from this program is how to communicate in a meaningful way with people from different places."

The Center for Global Engagement also facilitated faculty leader and faculty liaison appointments to several prestigious positions. These experiences offer faculty the opportunity to infuse curriculum and the classroom with international content and literacy. For 2023-2024, appointments included:



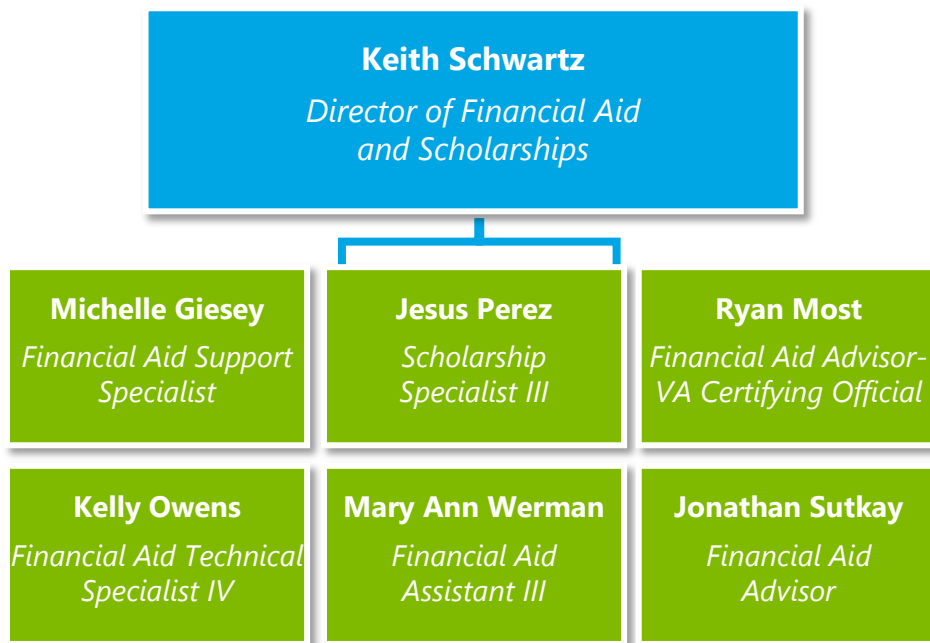
- Ginger Alms, associate professor of English, went to Carlow, Ireland.
- Kathleen DeMars, instructor of Adult Basic Education, led students to Dijon, France.
- Mellissa Gyimah-Concepcion, assistant professor of English, led students to San Jose, Costa Rica.
- Kim Rother and Jennifer Loiacano from Culinary Arts led a group of students to Italy.
- David Zacker, professor of humanities, led the ECC trip to Urbania, Italy.

Faculty with international experience can incorporate global perspectives into their curriculum, enriching the educational experience for students. Additionally, faculty liaison appointments are crucial for enhancing global perspectives, improving teaching and research, fostering professional development, benefiting institutions and students, promoting cultural diplomacy, and contributing to personal growth and fulfillment.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Our Financial Aid & Scholarships department provides financial assistance to students in need. Our department aims to ensure that all students have access to the necessary resources and funding to pursue their academic goals. We understand that the cost of education can be a barrier for many students. Therefore, we strive to provide opportunities for scholarships that can help alleviate the financial burden. Our goal is to empower students to succeed by offering comprehensive financial aid options and personalized guidance throughout the application process.

Our Team



Highlights and Accomplishments

We provided parents and students with information regarding state and federal grants, scholarships, student loans and student employment. Students also receive assistance completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Retention of Illinois Students and Equity Application (RISE) which allows eligible undocumented students to apply for state financial aid, as well as how to apply for scholarships.

Student Loans

Students interested in borrowing a student loan must meet with a financial aid advisor to help them understand the rights and responsibilities associated with borrowing, such as repayment

terms, interest rates, and loan limits. We help students understand and make informed decisions about their financial future.

Individual loan counseling has successfully reduced both the number of students borrowing loans and the total dollar amount borrowed. The number of students borrowing loans has decreased by 81%, from 1,870 students in 2010-11 to 350 students in FY 2023-2024. The total dollar amount borrowed has decreased by 77.5% from \$6,669,966 in 2010-11 to \$1,496,925 in FY 2023-24.

The U.S. Department of Education publishes cohort default rates (CDR) based on the percentage of a school's borrowers who default within a specified period of time after entering repayment. Colleges with high CDRs may lose future eligibility for federal grants and loans.

ECC's CDR has gone from as high as 20.5% in FY 2011 to 2.5% in FY 2019.

Note: ECC's federal student loan default rate has decreased to 0.0% as of the most recently published data from the Department of Education on September 25, 2023 for FY20. This rate has been impacted by the pause on federal student loan payments that began in March 2020. At present the national student loan default rate is also 0.0%.

Financial Aid Awareness and Financial Literacy programs

900+
Participants

The Financial Aid & Scholarship department hosts financial aid awareness programs for ECC students and the community. Also, presentations and FAFSA workshops are conducted at high school financial aid events. Over the last year the Financial Aid & Scholarships department has participated in 20 events with over 900 attendees.

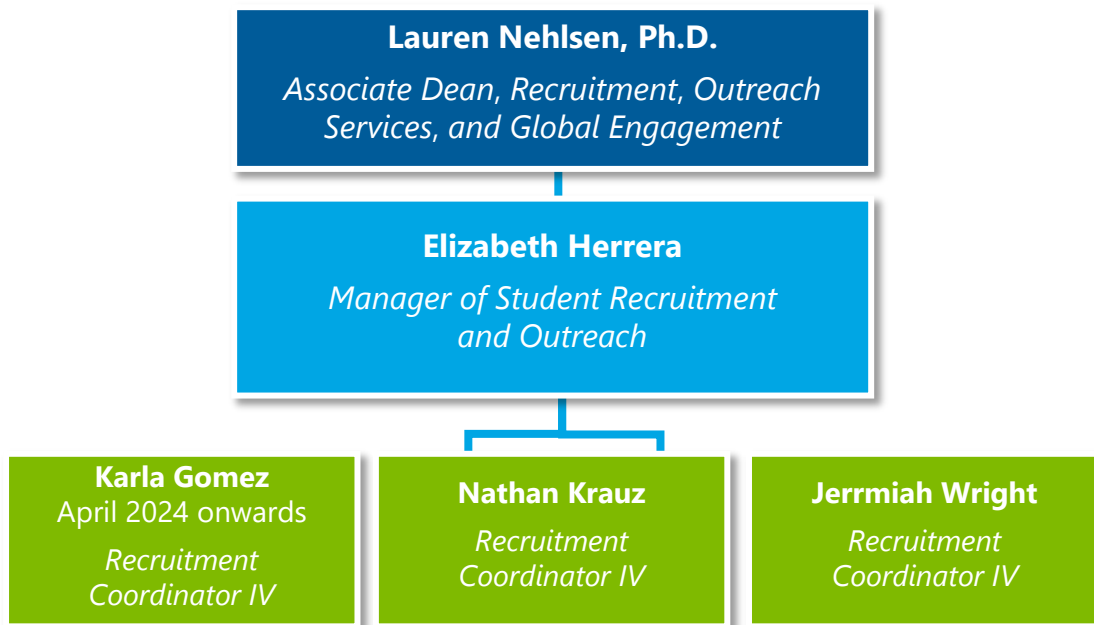
Scholarships

- The Board of Trustees Athletic Scholarship was awarded to 91 students at a total of \$200,640.
- The new Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship (ECACE), Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS), and PATH grants were awarded, totaling \$799,636.08 to 225 students.
- Foundation Scholarship funds awarded in FY 2023-2024 totaled over \$437,476 and were received by 417 students.

Recruitment and Outreach Services

The Recruitment and Outreach Department is dedicated to engaging potential students, promoting educational opportunities, and facilitating student enrollment. Our team focuses on creating strategies and executing campaigns to attract a diverse student body. Additionally, we partner with schools, community organizations, and other stakeholders to advocate for education and share information about ECC's programs and resources. Our mission is to empower prospective students by providing comprehensive information about available opportunities, ensuring easy access to enrollment resources, and facilitating a smooth transition into ECC. We are dedicated to supporting every student's journey from interest to active participation within ECC's community.

Our Team



Highlights and Accomplishments

7850+
High School Students
Reached

The Recruitment and Outreach Services department, a unit of the Office of Admissions and Recruitment, contributes to the mission of the college by providing information and resources for students to enroll at the institution and improve their lives through learning. During the FY 2023-2024 academic year, the department increased outreach and engagement efforts to better meet the needs of the community and students. Through these

18,632
calls received

efforts, the department engaged with over 7,850 students at both on-campus and off-campus events, marking a 41% increase from the previous year. Our office serves as the first point of contact for many students and community members interacting with the college. This year, our office received 18,632 calls. The high volume of calls reflects the department's role in providing essential information and support to

prospective students, ensuring they have a positive and informative first interaction with ECC.

High School Classroom Visits

The department increased offsite high school visits and partnered with high schools to create customized presentations focused on associate degree programs, career and technical education, completing the enrollment process and scholarships.

Through these presentations, students were able to meet with professional staff from departments such as TRiO and Financial Aid in the comfort of their home school and experience a more personalized pathway to post-secondary education. These visits have been well received and many high schools have requested additional visits for the upcoming year.

2800+
Students Reached
Offsite

Middle School Fridays

994+
Middle Schoolers
Visited ECC

During Middle School Fridays students from across District 509 had the opportunity to visit our campus. For many middle school students, this was their first exposure to a college campus experience. More than 994 students from thirteen different middle schools attended Middle School Fridays, where they



learned about college readiness and career paths, how college can be an affordable option after high school and why a postsecondary credential is important. Students received a customized campus tour, including a behind the scenes look at ECC CTE programs guided by ECC students who are Phi Theta Kappa members and student workers.

Experience ECC

350+
Participants

ECC hosted its annual Experience ECC Open House with renewed energy and vigor. Over 50 academic programs and student service programs participated. Students and their families had the opportunity to meet with faculty to discuss programs of interest and engage with student support departments to learn about available resources and services. They also received guidance on how to apply and navigate the enrollment process.

The event included 11 campus tours covering various areas of the college, including Health Professions, Culinary Arts, Career and Technical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts.



College Night

329

Attendees

As a host site for the annual Illinois Regional College Fair, ECC hosted 142 colleges and universities from across the country to meet with students to assist them in their educational journeys. College Night is one of the largest events hosted at ECC for the community, with hundreds of four-year colleges and universities and more than 329 students attended throughout the evening.

English Language Learners (ELL) H.S. Presentations

65+

**English Language
Learners**

As a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), we are dedicated to addressing the needs of our community. We conducted five Spanish presentations for over 65 English Language Learner (ELL) high school students, collaborating with high school representatives to bring these students to our campus. This visit allowed them to learn more about ECC and the comprehensive services we offer.

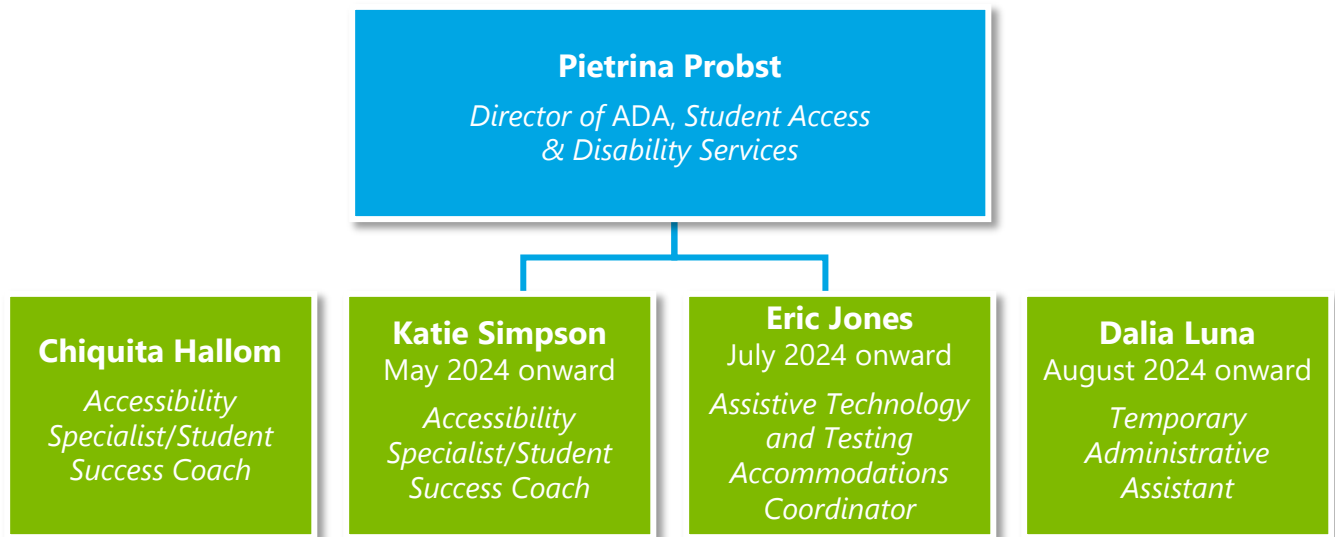
We also partnered with various ECC departments to highlight the resources available for a seamless transition and successful journey toward graduation, regardless of the students' current educational stage. Our presentation featured representatives from our Adult Basic Education Center (ABEC), Financial Aid & Scholarships, TRIO Student Support Services/ESL, student success coaches, a student panel, and included campus tours. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with teachers describing it as "the most informative trip I have ever had...centered around ELL students."

We are committed to continuing this partnership to ensure that all students are well-informed about the opportunities ECC provides.

Student Access and Disability Services

Our department aims to provide support and accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure equal access to education. We collaborate with students, staff, and faculty to identify and implement appropriate accommodations that meet the individual needs of each student. The goal is to create an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive academically and personally.

Our Team



Increase in Specialized Testing Accommodations

From summer 2023 through spring 2024, we have provided over 200 hours of test proctoring, reading, and scribing services to eligible students remotely and in person. This represents a 50% increase from the previous academic year.

Accessibility Specialist/Student Success Coach Program

312

Appointments

Our Accessibility Specialist/Success Coach Chiquita Hallom and Director of ADA, Student Access & Disability Services Pietrina Probst conducted 312 appointments with students to provide coaching on college success skills (e.g., time management, study strategies, self-advocacy, etc.). Survey data revealed that 90% of coached students agreed or strongly agreed that the coaching positively impacted their experience at ECC, and 80% utilized the appropriate resources for their success.

Expansion of Services

The department procured a \$313,000 ICCB Innovative Bridge grant for calendar year 2024, which is being used to fund the following:

- A second full-time Accessibility Specialist/Student Success Coach, who supports students by providing them with accommodations, addressing their accessibility needs, and teaching them college success skills. Katie Simpson was hired in this position in May 2024
- A full-time Assistive Technology and Testing Accommodations Coordinator, who will train students in using assistive technology, arrange for specialized testing accommodations, and create/obtain accessible textbooks. Eric Jones started in this position in July 2024
- Neuropsychological evaluations for students who experience financial barriers with obtaining disability documentation for their accommodation eligibility
- An external evaluation and consultation services through a well-known consultant in the field of disability services in higher education
- Purchase of laptops and tablets with assistive technology to loan to students with disabilities

Neurodiversity Statement

In collaboration with faculty and other stakeholders, we developed ECC's Neurodiversity Statement which was approved by the Board of Trustees. The statement is as follows:

Neurodiversity reflects the range of individual differences in brain function and behavioral presentation, which is part of the expected variation of people. Elgin Community College (ECC) recognizes neurodivergence among its students, faculty, staff, trustees, administration, and community and values their unique perspectives, approaches, strengths, talents, and myriad contributions to our diverse community. Accordingly, ECC embraces "neurodiversity" as a core component in its mission to "improve people's lives through learning."

Committed to principles, policies, and practices of inclusion, equity, and justice, ECC will utilize existing and develop additional resources to:

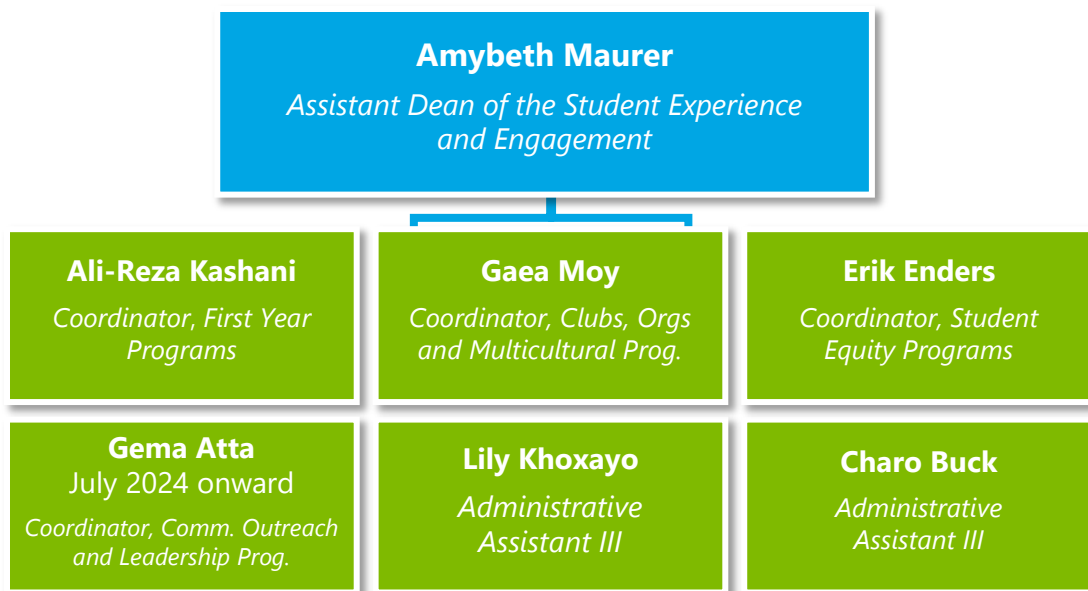
- a. cultivate a more inclusive and supportive learning and operating environment,*
- b. continue to integrate accessibility measures,*
- c. implement Universal Design principles that will benefit all individuals, and*
- d. overall, enrich the experiences of all members of our institution and community.*

Student Experience and Engagement Center

The Student Experience and Engagement Center supports student success by offering a comprehensive co-curriculum while complementing classroom instruction. The Center comprises the Office of Student Life and First Year Programs, which offer and organize hundreds of events annually to bring students together and foster a sense of belonging. Students connect with like-minded individuals who share similar interests and passions. Overall, Student Life and First Year Programs strive to create a supportive and engaging environment where students feel connected, develop leadership skills, and actively participate in the community around them.

During this fiscal year, 67,220 students have entered and received general assistance from the Student Experience and Engagement Center. **Source: door tracker*

Our Team



Student Testimony

"Originally, I had joined clubs for possible career options and ideas for my future. I never thought these communities would have such an influential impact on my life. It was through the club events and the diverse communities here on campus that I found where I belong."

- Julian Juarez



Student Life

25,862

Student Interactions

Our team consistently seeks qualitative and quantitative feedback from students to ensure our programming is meeting their needs. We measure satisfaction, attendance, and how outcomes are being met. We are committed to student success via the co-curriculum and use student feedback to inform our activities and how to improve.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, there were 25,862 student interactions within the Student Experience and Engagement Center.

553 Events hosted by Student Life and First Year Programs

17.3% Participated in Online Orientation

14% Participated in a Multicultural Activity

**The number of participants may reflect a duplicated head count.*

Student Clubs and Organizations

One of the most impactful engagements on campus is through joining an ECC club or organization. Joining a club or organization provides students an opportunity to gain leadership and service experience while connecting with compatible peers.

In the past year, active student clubs on campus increased by about 10% from FY2023 to FY2024—about a 76% increase since FY2022. Student leaders excel academically both in the number of credit hours completed and cumulative GPA when compared to the general student population.

ECC offered about 30 student clubs and organizations during FY2024.

+76%

**Active Clubs
since 2022**

30 Clubs/Organizations

+10%

ADAPT

Anime Club

Art & Design Club

Asian Filipino Club

Associated
Nursing Students

Black Student
Achievers

Dual-Credit
Connections Club

ECC Observer

Educators Rising

Engineering Tech
Club

Environmental
Conservation
Society

Fiber Arts Club

Film Club

Gamers United

Human Services
Club

Military Branches
United

Mu Alpha Theta

National Adult
Education Honor
Society

Organization of
Latin American
Students

Performing Arts
Club

Phi Theta Kappa

Recovery of All
Kinds

Social Dance Club

Spartan Christian
Fellowship

Spartan Project

Strength and
Wellness Club

Student
Government

Students Who Are
Not Silent

United Students of
All Cultures

We Rise ECC

Student Life Programs

TRIUMPH

Transforming and Impacting Undergraduate Men Pursuing Higher Education (TRIUMPH) is a mentorship program designed to increase the retention and persistence of men of color through mentorship, workshops that develop soft skills, social events, company visits, and community service.

54% Scholars Persisted from Spring 2023 to Spring 2024

11% Overall Program Membership Growth

16 New Members Joined in FY 2024

TRIUMPH experienced a tremendous program year that included workshop collaborations with the Financial Empowerment Center, Career Services, Transfer Services, Wellness Services, and faculty to name a few. Seven scholars were inducted into TRIUMPH this Spring and our scholars were paired with mentors. Scholars visited the LinkedIn offices in Chicago, where the scholars toured the offices, heard from a panel of employees of color, and learned how to optimize their LinkedIn profiles. Additionally, Triumph scholars attended the Goals and Grit Workforce Development Seminar at Triton College and enjoyed a Chicago Bulls game.

Three TRIUMPH scholars graduated this Spring. Here is a short message from one graduate scholar that is a powerful reminder of why we do the work that we do. He is a Dual-Credit graduate from Hampshire High School.

"I was able to wear the stole to graduation! Thank you for all the support and everything you've done for me the last couple of years. It was always nice to come to meetings every week and spend time with the guys and build myself. I passed all my classes and managed to get a B in physics, surprisingly. I also won sectionals and took 7th at state. I'll make sure to keep in touch!"

- Vince Scott

Spartan Pantry

The Spartan Pantry continues to be a resource for students to utilize whether they need a snack or food for the week. The Spartan Pantry's strong relationships with the Sherman Hospital Community Garden and Northern Illinois Food Bank have helped provide fresh produce for the pantry and its patrons. Visits to the pantry increased by 24%.

5,957
Visits
+24%

Building Konnections

Building Konnections are events that specifically cater to the students in Building K to get them more involved and active on campus. This fiscal year, 12 events were hosted with 1,724 students participating.

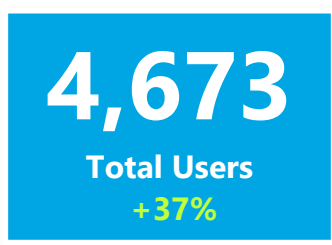
Fall Events: 1,003 total attendees

- Ice Cream Social – 275 attendees
- Gourmet Popcorn – 171 attendees
- Pop Up Pantry – 115 attendees
- Pumpkin Painting – 86 attendees
- Coffee and Donuts – 226 attendees
- DIY Ornament Making – 130 attendees

Spring events: 721 total attendees

- Valentine’s Day Craft – 115 attendees
- Gourmet Popcorn – 150 attendees
- Pop Up Pantry – 77 attendees
- Coffee and Donuts – 168 attendees
- Ice Cream Social – 86 attendees
- DIY Ceramic Pot Painting - 125 attendees

MyECC Experience Mobile Application



To engage more students and serve their interests better, Student Life and First Year programs launched the MyECC Experience mobile application in July 2023. MyECC Experience is Elgin Community College’s official mobile app. Connect to all things ECC anytime, anywhere! This app is designed to

enrich a student’s education and provide them with a personalized experience that provides access to student activities, events, and resources used most often. The team spent a good portion of FY2024 promoting and enhancing the mobile application. In our first year, there were 4,673 users, meaning that 37% of students have downloaded and utilized the app.

First Year Programs

New Student Online Orientation (OLO)

New Student Online Orientation is required for all first-time college students, returning/transfer students, International and Dual Credit students. Online Orientation is a comprehensive program for students providing valuable information on Programs of Study, Advising, Registration and Payment, and College Resources & Services.

4,417 Students completed Online Orientation

305 Students attended New Student Days

389 Students attended New Student Convocation

Online Orientation Survey Results

At the end of the online orientation, students were asked to rate their experience from 1 to 5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best. On average, this is how students answered:

- Overall online orientation experience: **4.358 out of 5.**
- As a result of this online orientation, how prepared do you feel for your academic advising appointment? **4.31 out of 5**

New Student Connections

New Student Connections are imperative for new students as they help them network and build long-lasting relationships at ECC. This fiscal year four events were hosted with 140 students participating.

Fall Events: 99 attendees

- Pottery Painting and Pizza – 48 attendees
- Halloween Spooky Brunch – 51 attendees

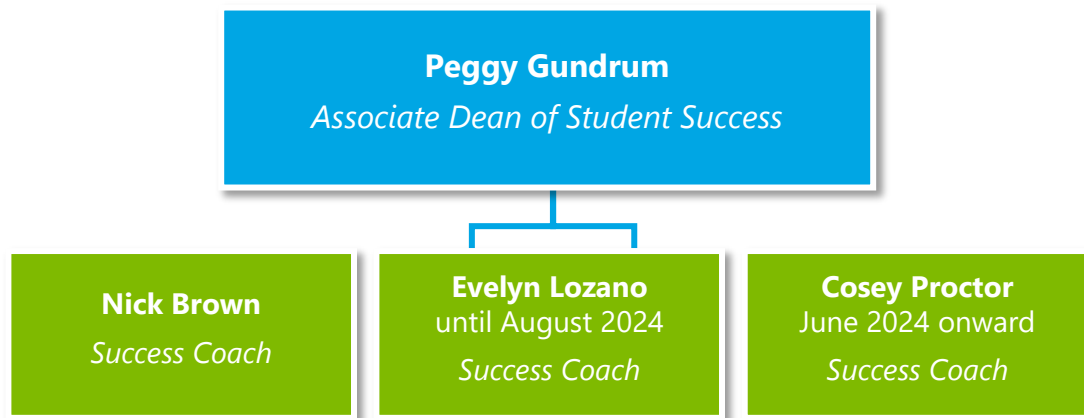
Spring Events: 41 attendees

- DIY Suncatchers – 33 attendees
- Happy Hour – 8 attendees

Student Success Coaching

ECC Student Success Coaches serve as dedicated support specialists, offering personalized, proactive, and comprehensive support to students. Their primary goal is to enhance student persistence and retention rates by nurturing supportive relationships aimed at guiding students towards the attainment of their educational goals. Success coaches play a crucial role in addressing equity gaps

Our Team



Our Highlights

In the 2023-224 academic year, Success Coaches had 916 appointments with students, mostly in-person. Success Coaches also participated in 8 classroom presentations to inform students about what success coaches had to offer. Overall, there were...

916 Appointments

In-person: **88%**, Virtual: **6%**, Phone: **6%**

Student Success Coaches helped students most often with...

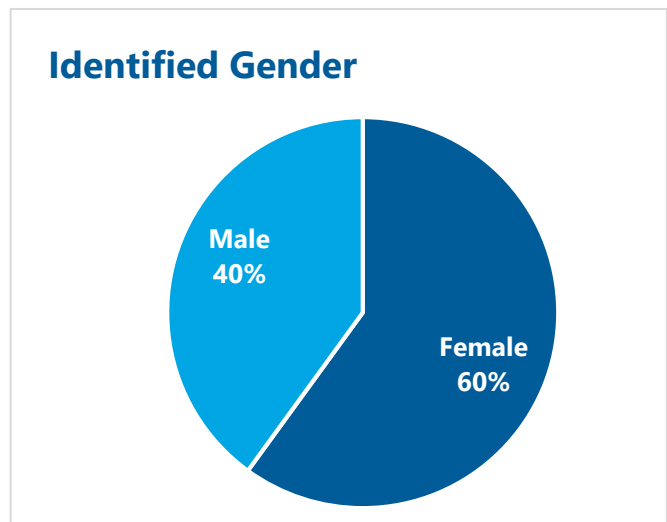
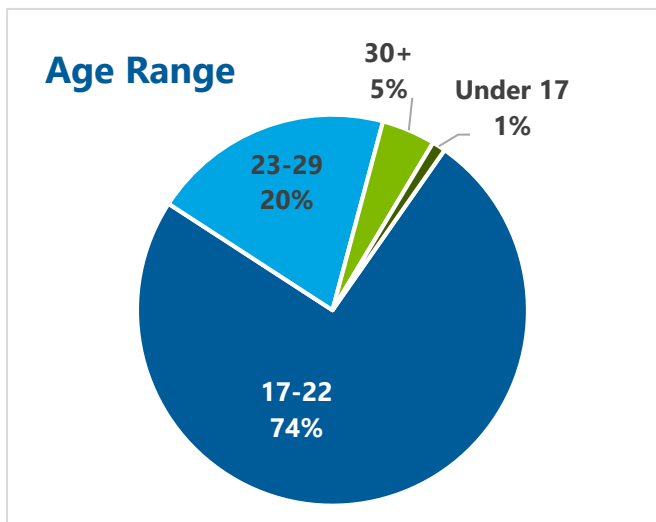
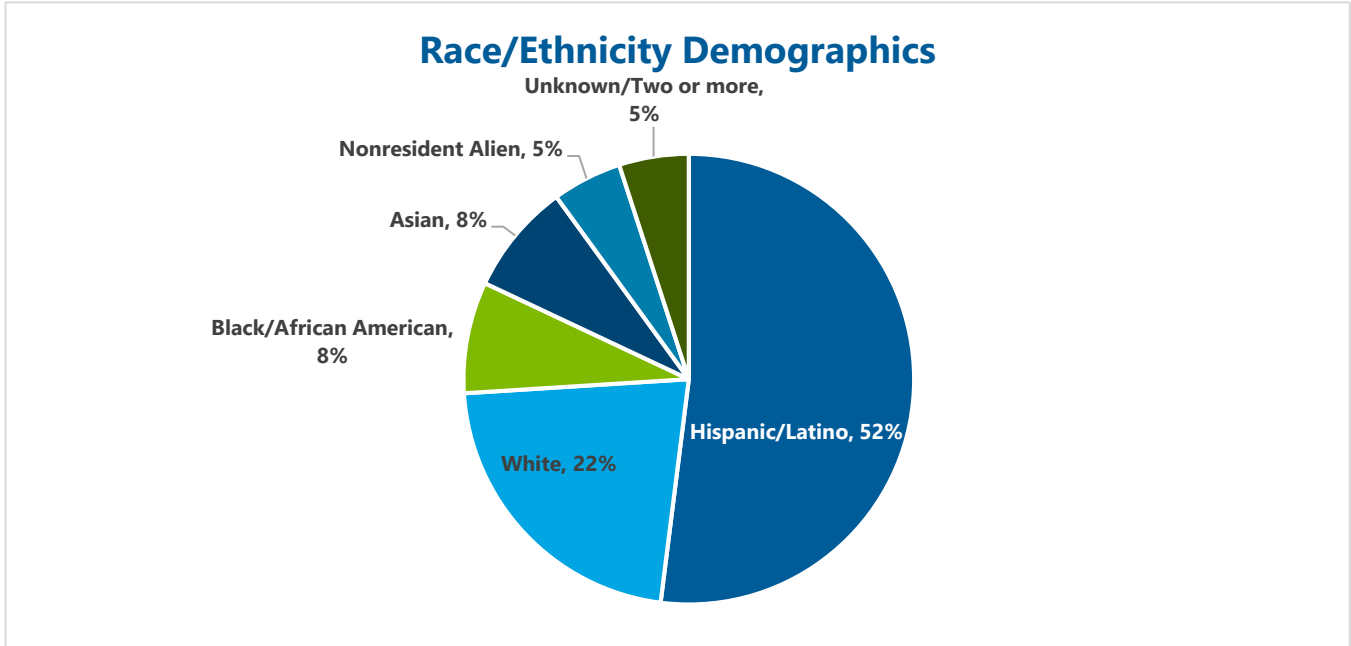
Academic Skill
Development

Identifying and Leveraging
Resources

Time management

Demographics

Students who seek Coaching Services fall into these demographics...



Tabling

Success Coaches tabled in building B throughout August 2023 with a game called “Positivity Pong” to boost engagement. Participants tossed a ping pong ball into an arrangement of cups to earn a positive motivational message out of the cup it landed in. All in all, 147 students and 8 staff members engaged, including ECC President, Dr. Sam!



Workshops

Wellness Services put on a number of workshops in the fall and spring semesters.

Fall Workshops and Attendance

- You Belong Here, No Cap – 9 students
- Study Skills Workshop – 5 students
- Mindset Matters – 3 students
- Rise & Thrive: Goal Setting & Motivation – 8 students
- The F Word – 31 students
- Mastering Self-Advocacy – 3 students

Spring Workshops and Attendance

- You Belong Here, No Cap – 5 students
- Study Skills Workshop – 1 student
- The F Word – 22 students

D2L Drop-in Initiative

In partnership with the Distance Learning office, the Success Coach Team created a D2L page in Spring 2024 with a guided scavenger hunt to help new ECC students build on their foundational knowledge of D2L. The objective was to have students gain hands-on experience with D2L.

Study Squad

A student study group was created in Spring 2024 for those who might have difficulties sticking to their academic success plans or face executive functioning challenges. The group's objective is to help students develop effective homework and study habits, enabling them to feel motivated and confident in applying these skills independently. Additionally, the group aims to provide an opportunity for students to connect with peers who share similar academic goals.

Coaches Embedded in Developmental English

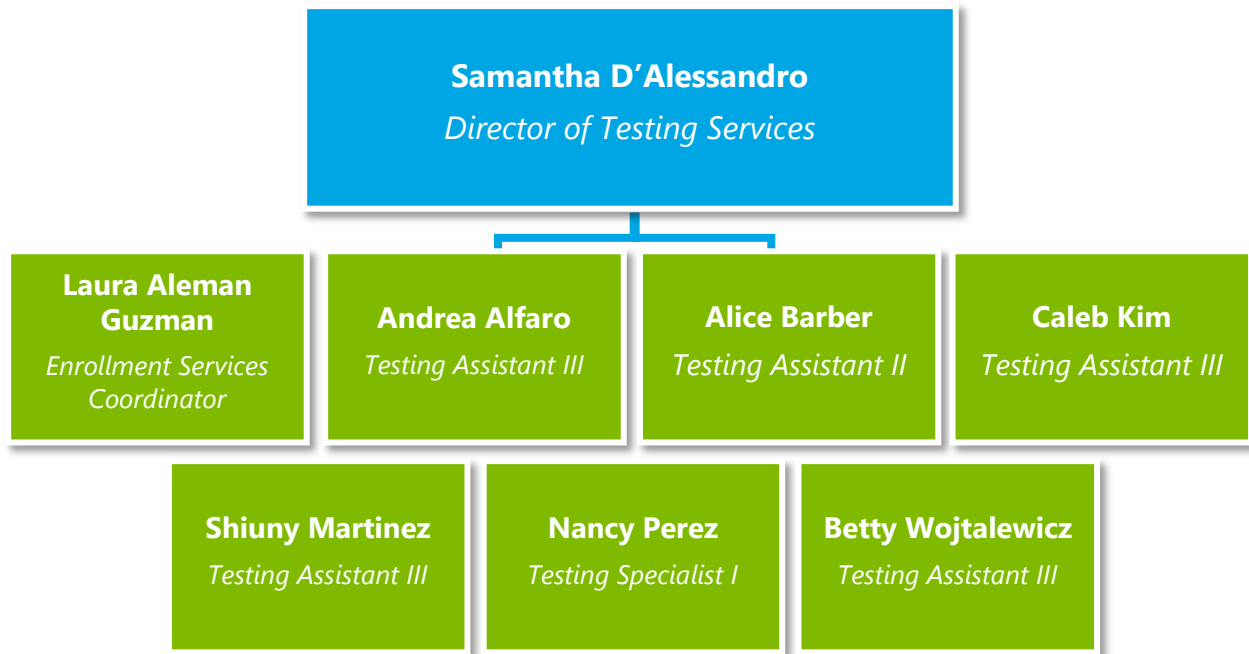
Nineteen (19) students in developmental English regularly met with a Success Coach during Spring 2024, and 74% of them advanced to college-level English.

Success Coaches continue to be embedded in all LTC099 classes.

Testing Services

The Testing Center is responsible for administering and overseeing various tests and assessments for incoming and current students. Overall, the testing department plays a crucial role in ensuring fair and accurate assessment for all students at ECC.

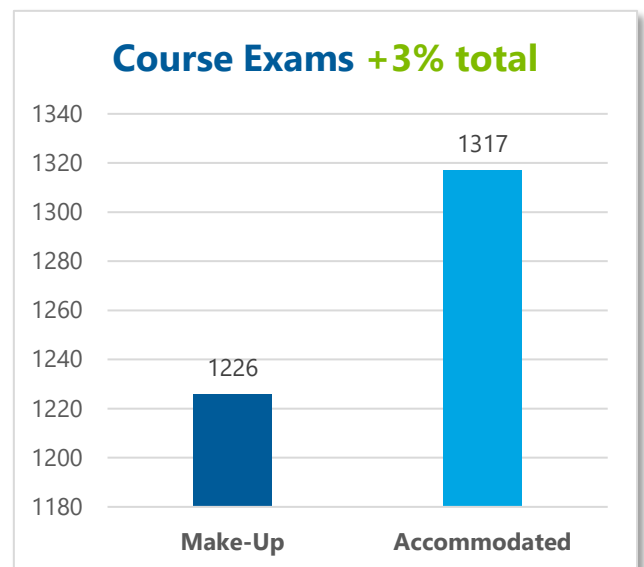
Our Team



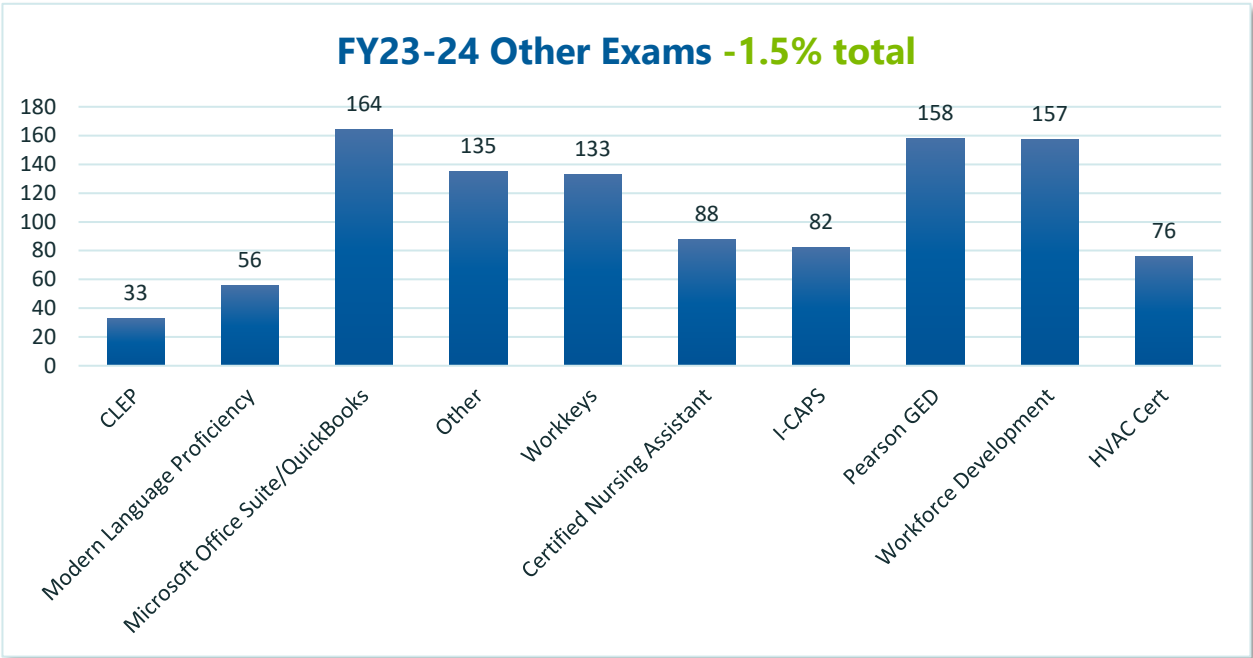
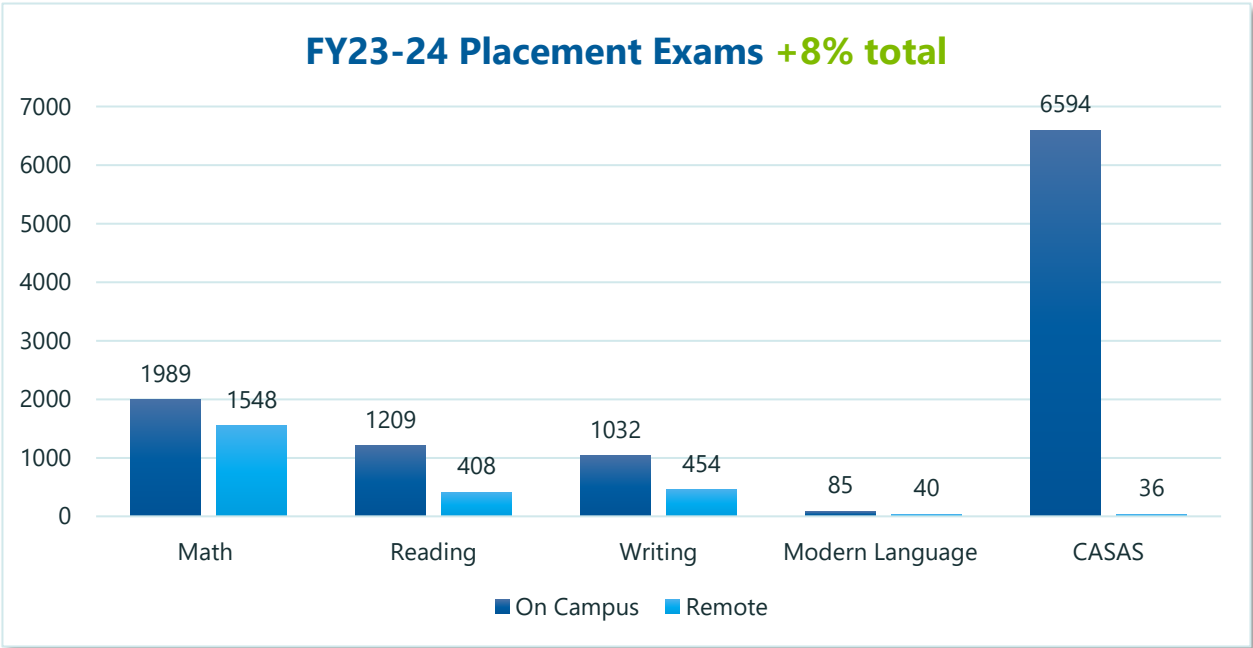
Tests Offered in FY 2023-2024

Testing Services provides a variety of tests for students and community members, including:

- Placement Testing
- CASAS Testing, for ABEC, I-CAPS and WIOA programs
- Course Exams: The office provides proctoring for ECC student course exams for students who are unable to take their exams during class time and for those that have accommodation needs. These exams are administered as paper-based and/or computer-based exams
- PearsonVUE GED and other subjects of certification



- Testing Services offers a variety of certification exams for both students and the public, as well as proficiency examinations for college credit, including the proctoring and score maintenance for the CLEP exam.



Changes and Initiatives in 2023–2024

- New part-time and full-time staff were onboarded with updated training processes.
- Meazure Learning exams have been added to the Testing Center and are open to students and community members.

- The Testing Center altered business hours to open one hour earlier during weekdays; this change was made to accommodate students who need to take course exams before their morning classes.

Innovative Enhancements

- The Testing Center implemented an electronic submission form for faculty submission of course exams for enrolled students. This has improved the speed and accuracy of the course exam process for staff, faculty, and students.
- The Testing Center began working with a vendor to create an integrated Reading/Writing placement test with an anticipated rollout in 24-25.
- Streamlined communication by creating standard email templates for emails to students, staff, and faculty.

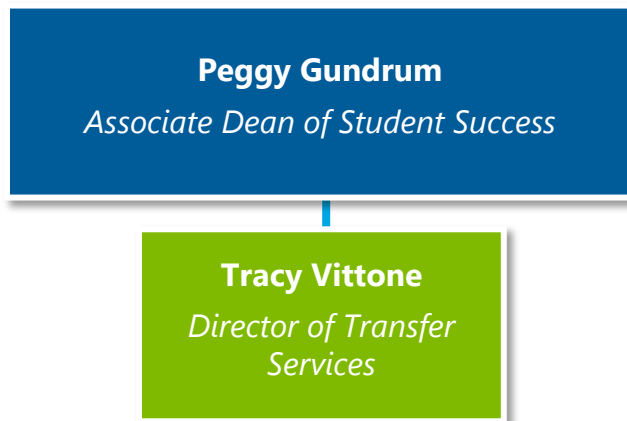
Cross-Departmental Collaborations

- The Testing Center has partnered with Continuing Education/Corporate Training and the Medical Assisting programs to coordinate group certification testing for certification exams.
- The course proficiency process was revised to create a more streamlined experience for incoming students and administering staff.
- The Testing Center adopted a new monthly report in collaboration with the Records Office to ensure the accuracy of CLEP scores received by the College.
- An increase in Dual Credit Placement testing saw additional “field trips” for visiting high school students to take placement tests on-campus. The Testing Center codified the process for Dual Credit field trips and enhanced the experience for students by reserving study space and organizing student intake.
- The Testing Center worked with Nursing faculty to develop standard procedures for HESI testing for students with accommodations.
- Monthly meetings with the Adult Basic Education Center (ABEC) have resulted in more effective communication between department staff and early resolution of shared testing issues.
- The Testing Center and Office of Access and Disability Services (ADS) continued to strengthen their partnership by implementing a software update that allows the Testing Center to proctor exams on the ADS testing computer.

Transfer Services

Transfer Services provides resources to assist students interested in continuing their education beyond the associate's degree. Resources include developing partnerships with four-year institutions, providing campus visits to many of ECC's top transfer destinations, organizing college fairs and workshops, and collaborating with Academic Advising to share updates and resources to available ECC students.

Our Team



New Partnerships

- ECC partnered with Southern Illinois University Carbondale for their Saluki Step Ahead program, a distinct transfer opportunity for students to complete their bachelor's degree entirely online in select programs. Benefits to Saluki Step Ahead for full-time participants include early admittance into SIU and an \$8,000 transfer scholarship.
- New partnerships were established for students completing a University Transfer degree at ECC and transferring in the areas of Environmental Science (Elmhurst University), Music Production (Lewis University, Western Illinois University), Paralegal (Lewis University), Pharmacy (Harding University College of Pharmacy), and Social Work (Aurora University). A full list of University Transfer Degree Partnerships is available on the elgin.edu Transfer Services page.
- ECC formed new Career & Technical degree partnerships with Aurora University, National Louis University, Rockford University, and Roosevelt University. These partnerships enable ECC students who earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in the areas of Computer Information Systems, Culinary Arts and Hospitality, and Human Services to seamlessly transition into bachelor's degree programs.

Continuing Partnerships

Northern Illinois University: PLEDGE

In 2024, the Partnering to Lead and Empower District-Grown Educators (PLEDGE) program had a total of 23 graduates: 11 completing their bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education with ESL or Bilingual endorsement with Special Education approval and 12 completing their bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with an ESL or Bilingual endorsement. Of the 23 PLEDGE graduates, 20 are former ECC students (15 from underrepresented populations).



Since 2021, a total of 76 students have successfully completed the same teacher-licensure program offered on NIU's main campus at ECC.

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign: Engineering Pathways

Four ECC students completed the Guaranteed Transfer Admission program to the Grainger College of Engineering and will be transferring to University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in Fall 2024. Additionally, seven students successfully completed their first year of the program at ECC. In order to be eligible, students must complete a prescribed Engineering Program of Study at ECC, earning a 3.5 cumulative GPA and all A's and B's in required technical courses.

Campus Visits

Fall Semester

Transfer Services arranged campus visits to three commuter friendly four-year institutions: University of Illinois Chicago, North Central College, and Aurora University. A total of 29 students participated in the Fall campus visits. Each campus visit included a presentation from the Admissions office, a student-led walking tour of campus, and lunch at an on-campus dining center.



Spring Semester

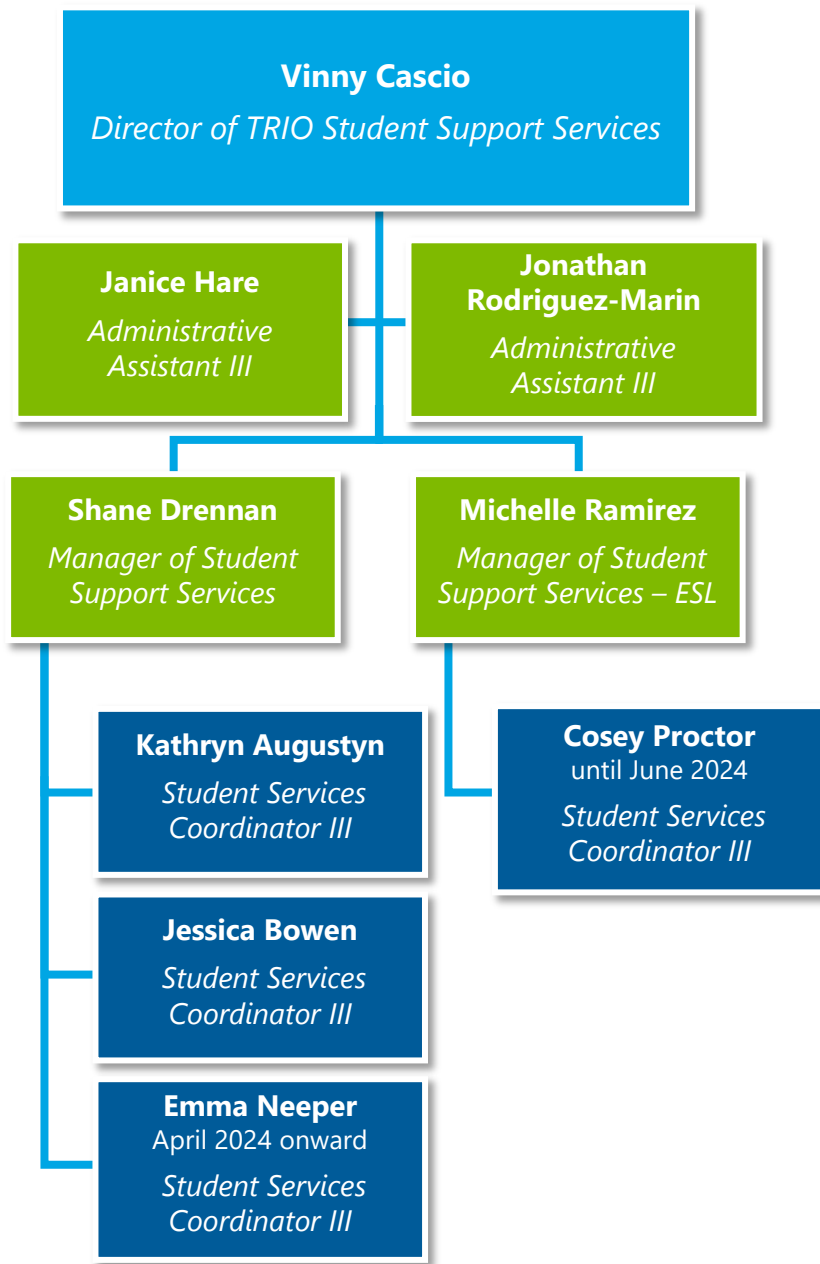
In collaboration with TRiO Student Support Services, Transfer Services organized campus visits specifically designed for underrepresented first-generation students to ECC's top three in-state transfer universities: Northern Illinois University, University of Illinois Chicago, and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. A total of 60 students participated in the Spring campus visits. Each campus visit was structured to inform students about transfer agreements, financial aid options, real student experiences, and scholarship opportunities, fostering their ability to envision transferring to a four-year institution as an achievable goal.



TRiO SSS and ESL

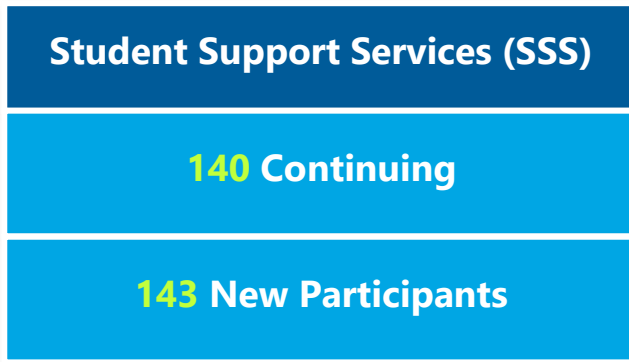
TRiO Student Support Services (SSS and SSS/ESL) is a federal grant funded program that helps economically disadvantaged, first-generation, and college students with disabilities succeed. It offers tutoring, academic coaching, financial literacy education, career counseling, and personal development support to improve retention and graduation rates. TRiO SSS/ESL also supports eligible students whose second language is English.

Our Team



Participant Highlights

TRiO Student Support Services has achieved notable successes, including a significant increase in student recruitment and enrollment into both grant programs. Student engagement has also improved, with more students attending one-on-one meetings with TRiO Coordinators. Furthermore, TRiO students have seen an increase in academic and professional scholarships awarded, which contributes to reducing their student debt burden. These achievements highlight the program's effectiveness in supporting economically disadvantaged, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities in their educational and professional pursuits.



TRiO Workshops

TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) partnered with Wellness Services, Tutoring, Financial Aid, Career Services, Student Success Coaches, and KCT Credit Union to revamp its workshops, increasing from 10 in the fall to 21 in the spring semester. These unique partnerships have significantly boosted student engagement and attendance at TRiO workshops. Additionally, there has been a notable rise in student satisfaction with the workshop topics and offerings, demonstrating the positive impact of these collaborations on enhancing the overall support provided to TRiO students.



Student TRiO Workshop Survey Feedback

Students were given a survey where they were asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. This is how students answered:

- Very Satisfied: **37** students (**80.4%**)
- Satisfied: **7** students (**15.2%**)
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied: **2** students (**4.3%**)

There were no students who rated their satisfaction as 2, dissatisfied, or 1, very dissatisfied. Students were also given the opportunity to make comments. Some comments are below.

"I really like these new workshops, they have been engaging and very informative. I think partnering with the Wellness Services department has been great!"

"I liked all the workshops I attended! They were useful and accurate in presenting the information I expected to hear. All the handouts were helpful. I also liked getting a little bullet journal from the Time Hackers Time Management presentation. It was a good idea to hand them out so the students present can begin to apply the information they learned from the presentation."

"These new workshops are fun and interesting! I enjoy the variety and they are done pretty well right now!"

Campus Tours & Partnerships

Summer & Fall 2023 Tours

Over the summer and fall semesters, TRiO students had the unique opportunity to visit Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan, Eureka College, and Northern Illinois University. During these visits, they gained comprehensive knowledge about the admissions process, transfer agreements, and financial aid opportunities. They also met with student leaders to discuss campus life, which helped them to envision themselves as part of these academic communities. These experiences were invaluable in helping the students make informed decisions about their higher education paths.



Spring 2024 Tours

In collaboration with Transfer Services, TRiO Student Support Services organized campus visits tailored for underrepresented, first-generation students to ECC's top three in-state transfer universities: Northern Illinois University, University of Illinois Chicago, and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. A total of 60 students participated in the spring campus visits. Each visit was structured to educate students about transfer agreements, financial aid options, real

student experiences, and scholarship opportunities, encouraging them to see transferring to a four-year institution as an attainable goal.



The Library Advisory Collective (LSAC)

The Library Advisory Collective (LSAC) is a group of TRIO students focused on campus involvement, leadership development, and supporting ECC's library. They identify and help solve problems in the library's physical space, digital resources, and media, and propose projects to enhance student engagement. Working closely with librarians, LSAC members gain skills in leadership, proposal writing, and data usage. Their projects include improving lighting, providing bilingual signage, upgrading study rooms, rearranging shelving, and planning library events.

KCT Credit Union: Financial Wellness Center

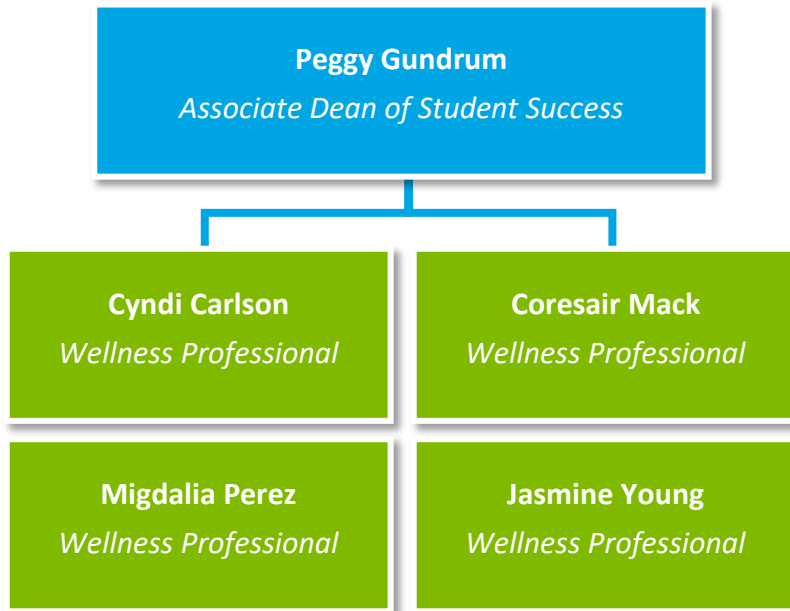
TRiO has established a new partnership with KCT Credit Financial Wellness Center to deliver impactful and informative workshops on financial literacy, aimed at overcoming the financial barriers faced by first-generation students. Our initial workshops covered essential topics such as Finances 101, how to build a budget, and understanding credit. These sessions provided students with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage their finances effectively, empowering them to make informed financial decisions and secure a more stable future.

The KT Credit Union Finance 101 workshop and How to Build a Budget workshop both had 8 TRiO participants, and the Understanding Credit workshop had 9 TRiO participants.

Wellness Services

Wellness Services supports students' learning and academic success by providing services that promote healthy attitudes and behaviors focusing on the eight dimensions of wellness: Environmental, emotional, financial, intellectual, occupational/academic, physical, social, and spiritual

Our Team



Wellness Student Appointments

1773 Appointments and 400 students served
in-person, via phone, or virtually through DOXY telehealth

Students sought assistance from a Wellness Professional for...
(Ranking 1-5, 1 the most frequent concern)

1 Anxiety	2 Relationships	3 Stress	4 Academic Difficulties	5 Depression
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Mental Health Screenings Available to Students

Accessible to students 24/7 via elgin.edu, Mindwise provides students access to confidential and clinically-validated screenings for a diverse array of behavioral health concerns. Upon completing an online assessment, students are guided towards tailored mental health support resources. In the 2023-2024 academic year, students utilized Mindwise screenings 224 times.

224

Screenings

Raising Mental Health Awareness on Campus

Wellness Presentations

119

Presentations

To address the prevalence of mental health concerns among college students, Wellness Services

extends an invitation to faculty to arrange classroom presentations with the goal of informing students about the wide range of resources offered by Wellness Services. In addition to classroom presentations, faculty have the option to share a video presentation on their D2L page. Overall, there were 119 classroom presentations done by wellness professionals.



Annual Highlights

Mental Health First Aid Training

In August 2023, 15 administrators and staff were trained as Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) instructors, funded by the Mental Health Early Action on Campus state initiative. In spring 2024, we delivered six (6) MHFA workshops, and a total of 60 ECC employees completed the training.

Uwill Mental Health Support

Recognizing the increased need for mental health support for students, in January 2024, ECC partnered with Uwill, a leader in providing mental health and wellness services in higher education. Uwill offers students 24/7/365 mental health support for non-emergency in-the-

moment or crisis support from licensed Uwill clinicians, as well as guidance for next steps in care, regardless of the time of day, college closure or student’s location. Uwill’s dashboard provides real time data, analytics, customized reporting, and facilitates care coordination between Uwill clinicians, ECC Wellness Professionals and outside referral sources.

Peer Support Program

To empower ECC students, foster a sense of belonging, and promote an inclusive community that supports mental health and overall wellness, ECC Wellness Services dedicated the year to enhancing the existing Peer Educator program.

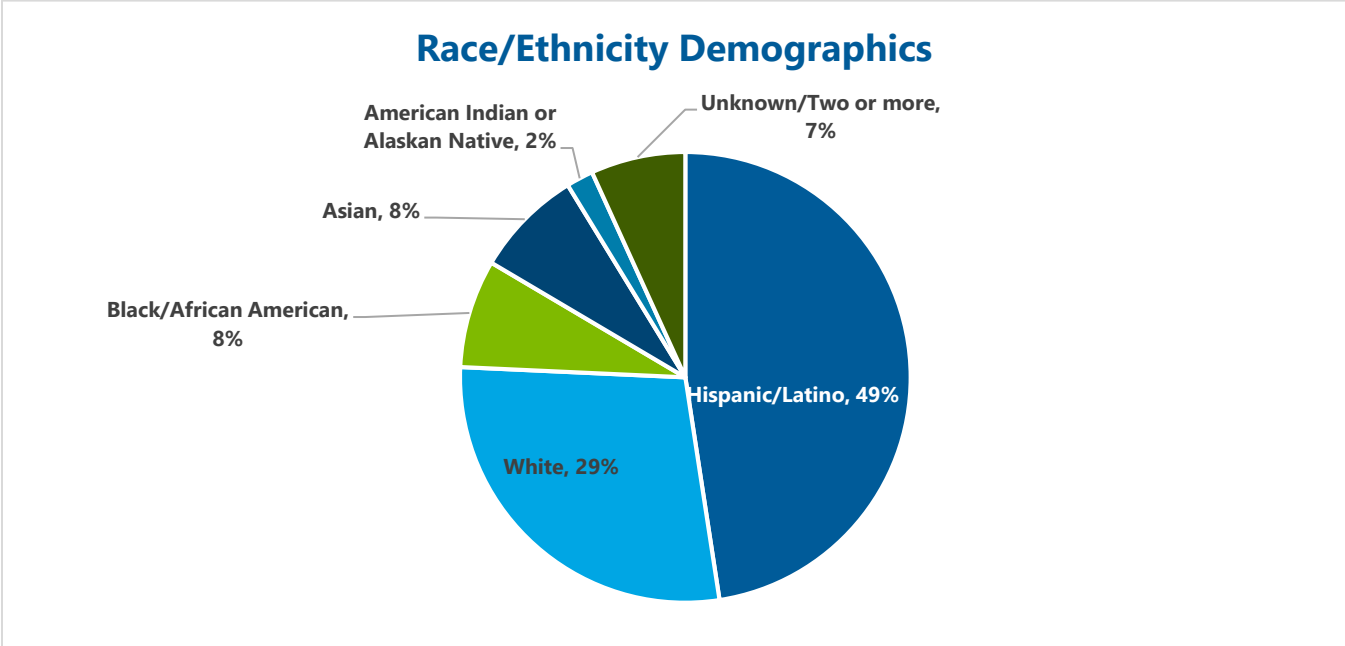
The enhanced Peer Educator program will include 1-2 Peer Educators (starting in the Summer of 2024), increased training in peer mentorship and mental health support, resources and referrals, as well as a procedure for emergency/crisis situations. The program is designed to provide flexible peer support programming and support.

Professional Development

Each of the Wellness Professionals completed free training(s) in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy during the Spring 2024. This training was provided free by the Illinois Campus Cares Center in collaboration with the Institute for Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy is an evidence-based model that uses a strengths-based approach to improve mental health and wellness.

Demographics

Students who seek Wellness Services fall into these demographics...



Veterans Services

ECC is proud to serve students who serve or served our country. Our Veteran Services Department is designed for military-connected students, providing relevant academic support and social connection. Our department provides personalized guidance to ensure military-connected students are successful in their academic journey. Our goal is to create a supportive community where military-connected students are successful, enjoy a sense of belonging, and feel part of the college community. In addition, our staff connects students with veteran community care services.

Our Team



Service Highlights

Vet Chat

To improve student access to vital support services, the department expanded upon our live chat option, allowing military-connected students to get quick answers to questions or guidance to other resources.

Webpage Expansion

In collaboration with ECC's Web Services team, we built upon and clarified our Veteran Services webpage to include links to community resources, a robust FAQ section, as well as sections on veteran career supports and veteran student profiles. Here we also showcase ECC "Military Friendly School" and "Military Friendly Spouse School" designations for '23-24.



S.A.L.U.T.E. Veteran Honor Society

Service. Academics. Leadership. Unity. Tribute. Excellence. S.A.L.U.T.E. is a national veterans honor society which acknowledges student veterans who demonstrate the qualities consistent with United States military service as they pursue academic credentials. In May 2024, the Veteran Services Department inducted two (2) new members into the ranks, providing S.A.L.U.T.E. graduation cords and pins to be worn at ECC's graduation ceremony.



Military Branches United (MBU) Student Club

The Military Branches United student club is supported and advised by the Veteran Services Coordinator. This club brings together students across academic disciplines and military branches for on-campus community and service. The current student leaders are rebuilding the club following the challenges of the COVID pandemic, and the newest iteration is stronger than ever. The club, along with any other military connected students, gather in our beautiful Veteran Resource Center in building F.



The Elgin Community College Student Services & Development division embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to working together, and with our college and community partners, to address barriers to student success and to promote a culture of inclusivity, compassion, and mutual respect.

The design choices in this report were made to align with international accessibility standards.



Elgin
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*Student Services
and Development*